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TOM DUFRESNE OF ILWU LOCAL 500, PCPA

INTERVIEWEE: TOM DUFRESNE

INTERVIEWERS: HARVEY SCHWARTZ

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[00:00:00] **HARVEY SCHWARTZ:** Tom, can you give us your name and date of birth, what local you are from, and where you were born?

[00:00:27] **TOM DUFRESNE:** Sure, my name's Tom Dufresne, and I'm a member of ILWU Local 500 which is in the port of Vancouver, British Columbia. I was born in 19—November 1st, 1950, in Montreal, Quebec Canada.

[00:00:42] **HARVEY:** Can you tell me a little bit about your youth?

[00:00:45] **TOM:** Well, I grew up in Montreal. During the sixties it was quite a tumultuous time in the city and in the province of Quebec in Canada around the language rights issue. A similar sort of things we are seeing now are different issues, but the same sort of idea going around, where people are trying to corner people, or paint people with labels and create a version of racism without appearing to be racist. Appearing to try to resolve problems that don't actually exist and actually create more problems for the people who were there. So it was an interesting time but not much has changed over the years, unfortunately.

[00:01:28] **HARVEY:** Are you a French Canadian in background?

[00:01:30] **TOM:** Yes, my father was a French Canadian. My mother was a Scott Canadian, of Scottish birth. And [I] grew up going to English school. In Quebec there's a unique schooling system, you have a French

Catholic School system and an English Catholic School system, and a Protestant School system. And never the twain shall meet with the three. You would go to one of those three and then their various religious organizations have some of their own schools, what you folks call charter schools. And I went to an English Catholic elementary school and high school.

[00:02:09] **HARVEY:** Are you totally bilingual?

[00:02:11] **TOM:** No. No, unfortunately, I lost much of my French language skills. I have lived in British Columbia for over 40 years, since 1970. So I don't speak much French at all. Actually it's a bit of a shame that the fact that I didn't keep up my French language skills. Although my daughter, by the way, is completely bilingual, she speaks four languages actually. So I guess what I lost, she picked up.

[00:02:44] **HARVEY:** Tell me a little bit about your schooling and whether you had early jobs before you found the ILWU.

[00:02:51] **TOM:** Well, yes. I went to school and I finished actually in adult education in 1969—finished high school. And during the inter-period in the mid-sixties, I worked at a lot of factories. You know, making lawn furniture, both out of—wooden lawn furniture or aluminum lawn furniture with the plastic strapping.

I actually worked at a number of places where the working conditions were less than optimal. I got injured at a factory called Compact Ladder [sic], where we made lawn furniture out of cedar. I got pulled into a drill press and almost lost my arm. And the response that the company had was to give me a late duty job, but [they] never filed for worker's compensation. And I was working there after school and things—I was about 15 years old. And that was an early learning experience that, you know, you can't count on your employer to take care of you that you need to take care of yourself. And the best way to take care of yourself is to join a union and have a strong camaraderie in the workforce and the people you can rely on that you work with.

[00:04:07] **HARVEY:** Were there any unions early on in this early-phase of your life?

[00:04:10] **TOM:** No—

[00:04:11] **HARVEY:** Was there a union—

[00:04:12] **TOM:** No, no that wasn't a union shop. I worked at a couple of places where there were supposed unions. You know, places where you paid your dues but you never seen a union rep the whole time you were there. And when you did have a complaint and complained that to a shop store or whatever, you end up going straight to the manager with it, and the next thing you know you'd be out the door or even you did the dirtiest job at the place so you'd quit. I was in the construction industry which was heavily unionized in Quebec, almost 100%. It was called the Joint Committee. And you have to join the Joint Council and there's some very militant unions in the construction industry and very good unions so I've had some experience with them also.

[00:04:54] **HARVEY:** Your parents involved in unions or politics or labor politics?

[00:04:58] **TOM:** No, no. My parents weren't involved in the union politics or even politics at all. Generally working-class people just working away, trying to make do the best they could.

[00:05:15] **HARVEY:** How did you gravitate out west, come out to British Columbia?

[00:05:19] **TOM:** Well, like a lot of young people in the sixties, [I] went on the road. My friend and I were

heading to California, actually. And he had a job in California, he was computer programmer back in '68, '69, 1969. So he had a job offer from one of the movie studios in California and so we headed out west in my car. And we got as far as Winnipeg, my car broke down. I hung around Winnipeg to sell the car because we couldn't afford to fix it he continued on actually down in California. And so I hung around Winnipeg for a couple of weeks, met with—you know, you hang around the street people and all the goings on in the world. And you know, I was 18 years old, so seeking out a life of adventure, sort of thing. Then I ended up hitchhiked out to British Columbia, rode freight trains and you know I took the Calgary—freight trains from Calgary to down to Vancouver. And hung around Vancouver, lived on the beach and met my wife Liz, who—we've been together now for 44 years. But you know, we started hanging around together and that, around the courthouse and down at Third Beach and listening to the [inaudible] and what have you. We travelled back to Montreal. Once again hitchhiking and riding the freight trains. And went back and finished high school and then came back out to B.C. in November 1st, 1970 and I started on the Vancouver waterfront in April 1971.

[00:06:56] **HARVEY:** Let me ask you about riding the freight trains, what's that like?

[00:07:00] **TOM:** It's interesting, to say the least. You never know who you're going to run into, one would think there wouldn't be anyone else on a freight train but we started riding the locis [locomotives] . You know you see the trains going through the mountains, you'd have 3, 4, 5 locomotives and so what you do is there'd only be crew in the first locomotive, so you'd jump on the second or third, or fourth loci, and hopefully the door would be open. If the door wasn't unlocked then you'd be having to sit out on the platform, so you didn't want to go up on the ladder that was straight up and down. You'd want to go the ones with platforms so if the door was unlocked you'd have a place to sit until you got to the next place where you could jump off and wait for the next train. So, it was interesting, you'd run into people. Never had any really bad experiences doing that, but I know some people that did. So you know, it was interesting.

[00:07:49] **HARVEY:** Dangerous?

[00:07:50] **TOM:** Oh yes, certainly. You wanted to make sure you got up there, because you could get hurt awful bad. It's not like the Western movies where you see people jumping off trains and rolling in the dirt, because if you've done that you'd be pulling rocks out of yourself for quite a while. You'd run along the loci and run along the ladder, and you grab the ladder and you keep running and you climb up the ladder or step up on the platform. And when you get off, the same thing. You wait till it slows down and you start running, your feet better be moving before you hit the ground and you just keep going and you'll be alright—watch out for switches. Last thing you want to do is be getting off and you'd see a big switch sitting there in front of you, because you'll be wearing it, right? So.

[00:08:31] **HARVEY:** Did you say your girlfriend went back to Quebec with you?

[00:08:36] **TOM:** Yes, my wife, Liz. We went back to Montreal.

[00:08:40] **HARVEY:** How was her experience riding the freight trains?

[00:08:44] **TOM:** Interesting. I think she'd say. We did it the one time, I wouldn't recommend traveling that way all the time, but it was a kind of a unique experience.

[00:08:58] **HARVEY:** Wow.

Okay, you get out here in 1970. How did you find the union? How'd you figure out—how did that work?

[00:09:08] **TOM:** Well we lived down in Vancouver in the East end, down around Nanaimo Street. It was about ten blocks from the dispatch hall. And I got a job one day at a place called Bristol-Myers [now, Bristol-Myers Squibb] —they make Clorox and you know, different types of household cleaning products. I got a job there unloading boxcars for a couple of days. And when that was finished unloading the boxcars and loading boxcars with new product, I didn't want to work in the plant because I couldn't stand the smell of the chlorine and everything down there in the bottling plant so I went, walked along the waterfront some more, I ran into a couple of people and they told me—I was looking for a job at the grain elevators or anywhere on the Commissioner Street at that time in Vancouver. And they said, "Well, they're hiring at the Dispatch Hall." So I asked where it was and they told the address, "1434 Franklin Street." I went up there and I asked about work. And they said, "Well, come back tomorrow morning." And so I came back, put my name on a piece of paper, my name and my social security number threw it in a box. As luck would have it, my name got picked. So April 14th, 1971, I got my first job.

I can't recall, I think it was working on a coffee, actually, re-cooping coffee, where coffee was coming in off the ships. And before you'd load it on the boxcars, they have a tester there so he'd have a probe that he put in the coffee sacks and test the quality, take samples to test the quality of the coffee and we would weigh the bags, put them on a scale. And they'd weigh so many bags out of a sampling I guess. Say a thousand bags, they'd weigh X amount or whatever amount was required. So there'd be two of us on the coffee sacks, they were 220's, so we'd put them on a scale and take them off the scale and put them on a palette board. Got that job for about 4, 5 days. I thought, well that's not too bad, and just went from there.

[00:11:08] **HARVEY:** Did you use little coffee hooks?

[00:11:11] **TOM:** Yes, yup. We saw them, they were going out of use around those years because they were worried about creating damage to the cargo and what have you. So they'd have them there and they were picking them up. But you found it was pretty good if you just grab the bags by the ears and you can move them without the hassle of a hook.

[00:11:32] **HARVEY:** And how much did these bags weigh?

[00:11:34] **TOM:** Those coffee [bags] were 220s, so 220 pounds. There were two of you and one of you on each side.

[00:11:42] **HARVEY:** So it still sounds like a lot of weight.

[00:11:43] **TOM:** That's a lot weight. [nods] I mean, I was in good shape though. I was 19 years old so, pretty good shape.

[00:11:53] **HARVEY:** What was your first encounter with the union. I mean when you figured out what all this union stuff was all about?

[00:11:58] **TOM:** Uh, well—

[00:11:58] **HARVEY:** Or if you have any experience with the union when you figured it out—

[00:12:01] **TOM:** Well, I was quite impressed with ILWU and with the union and the people in the Local 500, who were the business agents at the time and the presidents and what have you, and the executive. They were a good bunch of people. I worked for 11 years as a casual before getting in the union. And I had a quite good experience actually. One of the early heroes was Roy Smith. He was a former president of Local 500, and

president of ILWU Canada, or at that time it was the ILWU in Canada. And he was a very strong individual and a very righteous person, highly principled and I was impressed by that.

[00:12:51] **HARVEY:** How does the system work in Canada? You mentioned you were a casual, do they have, how does it work as compared to the way it works in the United States?

[00:12:59] **TOM:** Well, I've never worked out in the U.S. but I think it works much the same except that we don't have B-membership in Canada. You just have membership or you're a casual. We have what's called welfare paying casuals. So you work your way through the boards and as you get a green seniority, you go from A-board, you start on—now it's called a T-board, but in my day it was the X-board on the back wall where you just had a plate there. Or you'd start up on the boxing and you went on to the X-board, and then you have what's called a Super X-board. On the Super X-board there were two hundred-some-odd people and you had a plate, and you had to be in there by 7 a.m., plug your plate in. The board would close and the glass plate would come down and the dispatcher would dispatch the jobs.

I liked that way that it was done on a fair and equitable basis. I'd been on other jobs before, like in construction, where it was a shape-up and a lot of favoritism being used—which I didn't like—and with this system, I believe is a very fair system. It's the button system, so if you don't make a job tomorrow but the button stops in front of you, you don't have to worry about [it] going back to somebody's brother-in-law or somebody's uncle getting the job ahead of you. It's whoever is in line gets the job. The port of Vancouver was an employer-owned dispatch hall, but it's a joint dispatch. So the business agents would be there to oversee and make sure the dispatch was run in a fair and equitable manner. And I believe they did a very good job of it.

And I worked at down below and all the various jobs, sack jobs, hides, rubber, just about everything. And driving. Then it got very slow in 1973 in British Columbia. I started just before the American Strike [Longshore Strike], which was 180 days that fed a lot people in B.C. [British Columbia] because it created a big ground swell of work and you could work almost five-days a week. In 1972, it was still somewhat busy, but in 1973 it got very, very slow. By May, I had only 100 hours. And so I went and applied to go back to school, to go to trade school to take an apprenticeship program, which—heavy-duty mechanics. And I went to a place called Kamloops which is about 250 miles north of British Columbia—north of Vancouver and went to school for six months, take the apprenticeship course. Then came back down and stayed on the waterfront and applied for a regular workforce job and got one. I worked in the trades for about 10 years.

[00:15:41] **HARVEY:** Oh, you did?

[00:15:43] **TOM:** Yes. Yes, I worked as a mechanic, a place called CPR [Canadian Pacific Railway] Pier B in B.C. which is now the Canada Place Cruise Ship Facility. And back in the old days—that was several piers down there—and I worked there at a mechanic shop, worked at several of the other mechanic shops around the waterfront, worked regular workforce as a millwright, worked as a mechanic. And then I got into the union in 1982. April 1982.

[00:16:12] **HARVEY:** Were you, did you continue do some waterfront works, so that you would qualify as a full member?

[00:16:20] **TOM:** Well, the good thing up in Canada, under the collective agreement, is all those hours' work were longshore hours. They all contribute to the pension plan and to the welfare plan and working under the master agreement. You know, you are a longshoreman, just because you're working in the trades doesn't negate that or in my opinion and a lot of people's opinions. What we're seeing nowadays, a conversion to greater automation, the hours are going to be in the trades, in the repair and maintenance of equipment, computers, and

what have you. I mean, we have to be able to seize those jobs for our future and to secure the pension plans, to secure the health and welfare benefits. It's a changing nature of work. So we go from fletchers and handheld sack cargo to a forklift, to the robot—what was called the robot in those days—and then to bigger sling lows and palletized lumber and packaged lumber. And each of those ideas, when they came along, there was a heavy resistance to them, but like anything in that nature, it's going to prevail. But you have to make sure you could secure your work. And so the trades work became a greater and greater portion of the amount of work that's under the ILWU B.C. collective agreement.

[00:17:51] **HARVEY:** That's very helpful. I have one question, during the 1971 Strike, was there any discussion in Vancouver of striking in sympathy or in refusing to handle cargo coming in?

[00:18:04] **TOM:** The longshoremen of British Columbia in Canada refused to handle hot cargo, cargo that was destined for the U.S. Actually it was on my other job, I've just been down at the waterfront for maybe less than six months, and the longshoremen refused to handle the cargo. And the employer at that time went to the courts. I was a casual and I could've been on the waterfronts for six months, so I don't know all the discussions that went around it. And yes, they refused to handle it.

[00:18:36] **HARVEY:** But you said there was still a lot of work?

[00:18:38] **TOM:** Yes, there was a lot of work, yes, because there was a lot of work destined for Canada that have been going through various other ports and so they re-route them back to Canada, I believe.

[00:18:53] **HARVEY:** What was the worst cargo to work? What was the most miserable cargo to work?

[00:19:00] **TOM:** The most miserable cargo was hides. You'd unload boxcars of hides or—and put them on pallet boards. Or you'd be working on the container side of it because they started containerized them and sent them by ship. Before the containerization, we used to be below on the ship and work, they'd come down on boards and you take them off the boards and stow them. I never had that job, but I had the job in the boxcar and I had the job a few times in the containers, loading the containers with hides. That was miserable because they'd sit around sometimes for months on the sidings and they weren't refrigerated cars or insulated cars, they just sat there and started rotting. You got right in there and you had to go to work. But you always got a seat on the bus on your way home, so you never had to worry about that—nobody would want to get near you.

[00:19:51] **HARVEY:** Yes. Any other cargo that you recall that was difficult to work with?

[00:19:59] **TOM:** Well I worked at the Cassiar Asbestos Dock and at the time, and that was just at the advent of the plastic bags for asbestos, like a woven bag. I, unfortunately, did work some of the cargo, the asbestos that came in burlap sacks and worked at Cassiar at Le Pont Pierre loading down below on the ship, loading the sacks of asbestos. And in those days, you didn't get any dust masks and the air would be full, you couldn't even see over the hatch, it'd be like a snowstorm. You have all these particles of asbestos in the air and I worked there several times, numerous times. Then I worked at also at Cassiar Asbestos in around 1989 or 1990, driving a heavy forklift—it's a 52,000 pound machine—loading and unloading the scow, where the asbestos was in the containers and we would discharge it from the coastwise containers into deep sea containers. So the sheds at Cassiar had years and years of the asbestos, being in there on the floors and the walls and everything. Even though they tried covering the walls with plastic and what have you, later on it still had an effect over the years.

And the years working as a mechanic in the trades, you worked with asbestos with the brake shoes and you'd be changing the brakes on a forklift or on a piece of equipment you'd be working on. And the mufflers were wrapped in asbestos tape so that the heat wouldn't set fire to the dust, for instance on pulp dust or paper dust. So

that's not as obvious, so even though when I think about it, the hides might've been a disgusting-looking job, long-term who knows which is going to be worse of the cargos that somebody actually worked. It could turn out to be that something that looked relatively inert or harmless at the time could turn out to be the most deadly of the cargos.

[00:22:16] **HARVEY:** Did you have any health problems around the asbestos?

[00:22:19] **TOM:** Well I have some, beginning of CPOD, Cardiopulmonary Obstruction, but nothing too serious at this point in time, or that I know about at this point. But a lot of our members are coming down with mesothelioma, which is where asbestos fibers have been embedded in their lungs many, many years ago and they've been lying dormant and to a certain period of time, but then they can cause, mesothelioma, which is a cancer.

[00:22:56] **HARVEY:** Yes. Any cargo that you'd like, that was pleasant, if that's the right word, to work?

[00:23:08] **TOM:** Well, I just did the lines after I left office, so that was a good job, but you're on call on the time. It doesn't matter so much what the cargo was when it was pleasant. I liked the old gang system on the waterfront, where you worked in a gang, you knew everybody, you stopped for coffee at the same time, you got to hear all the ins and outs of what's going on. What the tricks the employers were up to, you know. Caught up on your politics. The camaraderie, I think, did a lot for this union because if people would see each other in the dispatch hall in the morning, or if they weren't going to the dispatch hall, they were in a gang and they were in a telephone dispatch—they would then see each other at a coffee break and at lunchtime and you'd sit around and you know, some people would be playing rummy or some people would be talking. And I think it did a lot to—that was the glue within our union and nowadays with the jobs where everybody's working in isolation, you have people that will be in a top pick or an [?RTG?] which is like—or a [?UTR?] , down in the U.S. they call them UTRs—or you have people working a little booze and [inaudible] for instance, all working by themselves. And they never see their fellow worker or senior head going by every once in awhile. They see them at the beginning of a shift and at the end of the shift, on the way in and out and that's it. It does a lot to do with, where they work through coffee and what have you, so.

[00:24:42] **HARVEY:** That's good, thank you. When and how did you begin to get active in the union? How come and what did you do?

[00:24:51] **TOM:** I was working at CPR, at the time—Pier B-C actually. And we had a set of some issues there and got involved with explaining them to the business agent and that. And then the fellow at the time, the president was Don [? Lanaville?] , another excellent individual and a character. And I got to know a little more about the union. We were allowed to attend, once we got to be welfare, was called welfare-paying casuals. That's where you get your health care paid for and you have different benefits and life insurance and things like that.

That's where I got involved, because working as a casual on the C-board, you weren't entitled to any benefits. And so you didn't get the benefits until you got to the A-board. So I was, would go to the membership-agreement committee every month, and sit there and sign in and go and make a case to do the [?M&G?] as to why we should have benefits. People saying, "Oh you're making good money, why do you need benefits?" Well, you know, I got kids, I've got a growing family, so you know it's important that you have that. I'm not opposed to paying dues, because we didn't pay dues, it was called a dispatch fee back then—it was very, very low. And but the committee thought about it, I guess they took it to the executive membership and so then they decided if you're on a regular work force, that you should pay the full A-board—it was called A-board dues, and that you'd be entitled to benefits after you've been on the regular workforce for three months. So that's how I got involved, initially. When I got into the union in '82 I ran for the executive four times, three times I wasn't, I didn't make it,

but on the fourth go I got elected. And I, subsequently, was re-elected every year after that until I retired. Or until I left office in 1996. So in total about 20 some odd years, 25 years.

[00:27:15] **HARVEY:** But you were president in the Canadian area?

[00:27:18] **TOM:** Yes, I was. I served many positions. I served as executive member in Local 500. I served as vice-president of the local. A full-time business agent for several years. I was president of the Local 500 for a number of years. And then I ran for president for ILWU Canada in 1996—I ran in 1994 and didn't make it, but ran again in 1996 and subsequently was re-elected eight times for two year terms. So, president for a total of 16 years.

[00:27:52] **HARVEY:** And what year was it that you retired?

[00:27:54] **TOM:** I retired this year, 2013 in March. I left office in June 2012. I didn't run for office again. I had announced my intention a year ahead of time that I wasn't going to run and that I would stay and serve until the convention in 2012. But at that time, I wasn't going to run for office again. And then I went back to work working on the lines, for you know, 9 months and then retired.

[00:28:28] **HARVEY:** Can you tell me some stories about being a business agent and later on being president of the Canadian area?

[00:28:36] **TOM:** Oh well, yes. I guess there's stories that could be told, and stories that can't be told. But you have a wide range of experience as a business agent. You never know when that phone's going to ring. If ever you're thinking you've heard everything, or seen everything, you haven't even scratched the surface.

So, I had several instances where people had got injured on the job. And that's always a very difficult issue to deal with because you have, not only the individual who's been injured, but you have maybe somebody who is operating the machinery that they got injured with. You have families to deal with, if you have to go and inform them, their husband, wife, brother, son, daughter is in the hospital or even worse. I had several experiences like that that helped shaped my thinking on how to deal with people. And you have to be very mindful and sensitive of privacy, people's privacy. And at the same time, you have to be very aware that the individual rights that we have—and everybody working with you has the individual right also to be working at a safe workplace. And so if you're not up to snuff, you can't be given the right to jeopardize somebody else who's, you know, in harm's way if you will because if you're not doing what you're supposed to be doing.

[00:30:19] **HARVEY:** Did you ever have to challenge anybody on these issues?

[00:30:21] **TOM:** Oh yes, I was quite a troublemaker. Probably one the employer's favorites—which is a good thing, I think, sort of like a badge to wear. I presented grievances often with the employer, taken them to arbitration. I appeared in front of the Canada Industrial Relations board numerous times for issues ranging from illegal strike activity, to illegal job shutdowns. And well, I can't say that we won most of the time in that instance, I'd say we certainly always gave them a run for their money. I've also appeared at the House of Commons—which is similar to the U.S. Senate or Congress—and speaking on issues of labor law.

The employer—many of things saying down here you end up dealing with on the job, how you'll have a small issue—what seems at the time a small issue—and it'll lead to where you can't get it resolved because the law needs to be changed. The employer's right maybe on the fact of law, but on a moral aspect, it is wrong, where there's no written law that they got to do something or not do something. There's the implied morality of it, that they have to give you a safe workplace, and the law says they have to give you a safe workplace but it's not

always written in stone what constitutes a safe workplace and doesn't.

So one of the issues we have in our collective agreement which I know you have down in the U.S. also, is the right to a safe workplace—and in our case it's Article 703 of the collective agreement. It gives you the right to refuse work, the right to refuse unsafe work and it's something that the employer always tries to get out from under because, although I don't think they go lay in bed at night dreaming of going out and hurting longshore workers, I do believe that often times they don't give due consideration. Their main and sole consideration is how much money they can make, how fast they can move the cargo, and they have very little consideration for those who work for them.

I appeared in front of the House of Commons Committee, the employers were trying to have the right to strike taken away in 1995, and the House of Commons had passed, had proposed a law to eliminate the right of longshore workers in Canada to go on strike. And in effect, take away your freedom of fair collective bargaining because if you can't strike, if you don't have the right to withdraw your labor, then you really have no rights.

The union, through the membership which is a big thing of the ILWU, and something to be very proud of is our rank and file union. The members have to be told the facts, they have to be given the opportunity to weigh those facts and all the issues surrounding it and I think that's why we've been so successful throughout the years, is because you don't have people sitting in dark rooms, making decisions, and hoping nobody will know about them. One thing with the waterfront, everybody knows everything in a very short time, what happened and if not before.

So we're successful in having the legislation changed prior to it being—it appeared in front of the House of Commons about three or four times and it looked like it was going to be accepted but we mounted a very successful lobbying campaign. We formed a group called the Canadian Maritime Workers Council, where we got together with the ILA [International Longshoremen's Association] in Canada and the CUPE [Canadian Union of Public Employees] Local 375 in the Port of Montreal, the longshore workers and the checkers, the ILA checkers of Montreal. And we put together a very successful program to have that law changed before it was adopted by the House of Commons. And the worst parts of the legislation were taken out—you know, the right not to strike and we had those provisions removed from the law before it was declared and received Royal Assent. So that shows you the success of solidarity across lines or different unions. We were very successful working with the other longshore unions in Canada.

[00:34:54] **HARVEY:** Any other major issues—

[00:34:57] **TOM:** Oh yes. I'm sorry?

[00:34:59] **HARVEY:** Go for it.

[00:35:00] **TOM:** Well, initially you asked me experiences as a business agent, I've had experiences where I've had to go out and inform families that the member or casual has been severely injured or been killed on the job. And I've also learned that you always have to be very tactful because you've got to be very careful with people and with their—how they're going to react to things.

Sometimes members will talk to you with some very personal information and you have to be mindful that you have to keep that to yourself. You have to weigh and balance and always make the members feel like they're being treated fairly. People realize you can't always win every beef. They realize that sometimes that they're wrong. They need the ability to air their grievance, they need the ability to see that you've given their grievance fair consideration, and due consideration and that you're working to try and resolve it in their favor. The worst

thing that you can do is to dismiss something as not worthwhile or just you know, just waving it off. It's key that you consider all the evidence and that you review the agreements and you present it to the employer in a fair and impartial manner.

Not to say during my whole time as president of Local 500, and as president of ILWU Canada, and as a business agent—we got taken to the CRB—which is now CIRB [Canada Industrial Relations Board] which equivalent of the NLRB [National Labor Relations Board] in the U.S.—and we never lost a case. We were always found to be just and decisions were upheld. And a key part of that is—the key part—is that we could always show that we gave full and due consideration and fought as hard as we could for the member's rights and to uphold the collective agreement and if you don't wander too far from your constitution, don't wander too far from the collective agreement you'll usually come out okay. It's when you start taking shortcuts and try to work in the gray areas, you know, that people start running into trouble.

[00:37:36] **HARVEY:** Tom, do you know any specific examples of grievances or situations that you make reference to, in a general sense, do you have any examples?

[00:37:50] **TOM:** Well, we had one individual in Local 500 at the time, who had crossed the picket line and had gone to work. Not a longshore picket line but another union's picket line and he had gone to work and was being paid to do somebody who was on strike's work—he was a scab. And so the local fined him. He was charged by another member union who had witnessed him scabbing. And he was charged and appeared in front of the Membership Agreements Committee and then the Special Trial Committee and he was fined initially. Well, initially he was going to be kicked out of the union, but the fine was changed to \$100,000 fine—which was well in excess of the money he made, but that was the point.

So he took us in front of the Canada Industrial Relations Board and we had a series of hearings that must've went on for about, went on for months. And the CIRB—and anyway so he wouldn't pay the fine and eventually it reduced, the fine got reduced to \$10,000 and the board said in the end that, "Okay, the union had fined him \$100,000 to teach him a lesson, so therefore you can't do that to make somebody an example. You have to treat everybody equally." And we said, "Well you know, we don't have scabs down here so we don't fine them every day." Anyway, so the fine was reduced to \$10,000.

He wasn't allowed to go to work in all that time and he was seeking to get reimbursed by the union for his lost wages. Under the Canadian Area Constitution, fines are payable before dues, so you don't accept somebody's dues if they haven't paid their fines. He refused to pay the fines, so we don't have to accept his dues. And the board ruled that the union did the right thing, did the proper thing, and to fine him \$10,000 and if he wanted to go to work alls he has to do is pay the fine. And he chose not to pay the fine, so therefore the union was liable for any of his wages. And this went for a long, long time, went on for maybe nine months or a year, of different hearing dates and what have you. And we were upheld.

Another example is somebody chiseling somebody else out of a job. The person was fined, decided he didn't want to pay the fine, decided that you know, he didn't want to have the system, the fair and equitable dispatch. He cheated the system and the Union fined him a day's pay. Like, 75 bucks or a 100 dollars or something like that. And he refused to pay, and he thought he was going to get—so he refused to go to work also and wouldn't pay his fine and just took us to the board. The board found in the end, the same thing, that he could've just paid his fine and paid his dues and gone to work. But since he didn't want to pay the fine, we were living in the context of our constitution and therefore the union was within its rights to refuse him dispatch. And so he lost a lot of money trying to take us on. But also I think it sent out a message to everybody that you know, we're not going to have any favoritism or unfair treatment of people. You can't the employer treating people unfairly and

you can't have that within the union. You've got try to treat everybody as an equal.

[00:41:27] **HARVEY:** That's, that's really helpful.

[00:41:30] **TOM:** I can't tell you the name of these cases because of privacy concerns, right?

[00:41:33] **HARVEY:** Sure, that's a reasonable stance. Did you hear very much about the 1935 strike against the shape-up that was lost? What did you hear about that strike?

[00:41:45] **TOM:** Well I've heard about it over the years from different people, from like Frank Kennedy, Dave Lomas, Dan Cole, numerous other people, and some of the books I read on the subject. And we have a memorial we do every couple of years. We actually have a memorial now in place down at a place called New Brighton Park, and we go down there every year. And it's not to celebrate 1935, but to commemorate it, to remember what can go wrong, and what can go tremendously wrong in a labor negotiation situation. So that's not a celebration that's for sure, people were beaten and shot and all kinds of—the union was broken, so it's a good idea to keep that stuff in mind, remember your history so you try not to repeat it and learn about it through that.

And plus my years on the International Executive Board, the IEB. Meeting with people down here, you hear about the '34 strike, you read a little bit about it. You see the Bloody Thursday. Once again, it's not a celebration, you don't celebrate people dying on the street, but it's a way of remembering, you got to try to keep people remembering what can go wrong and you know it all didn't come easy. Nobody ever walked up to some negotiation and said, "There's a big barrel of money in a corner, help yourself. You want some more health benefits? Sure. You want more life insurance? Sure." You know it's all been won through hard struggle and through people in some cases, losing their lives, in other cases people take it on the employer and being out on strike for long periods of time. Because the employers always going to resist our demands and try to limit our ability to improve ourselves. So that's how I learned about that.

[00:43:49] **HARVEY:** Did you hear much about the Canadian group in Vancouver coming into the ILWU in 1944?

[00:43:57] **TOM:** Uh no. I don't know a heck of a lot about it, I know a little bit about it but not enough to speak out on any authority.

[00:44:05] **HARVEY:** Um, in 1958 there was a landmark strike, basically for pensions. Did you hear very much about that?

[00:44:13] **TOM:** Yes. Yes, it was led by Roy Smith and that was one of the big issues in 1958, was the ability to have a pension and to—because the longshoremen prior to that had a very poor pension, I believe. I can't remember the exact dollar figure of it. But they were seeking to improve the pension and have it funded. There was an issue, I think it was Standard Life—I could be mistake but I think it was Standard Life Insurance Company—where they've been collecting the money for years for a pension, but they hadn't been crediting people with their pension dime. And actually the issue only got resolved—that was from 1958—it only got resolved about 10 years ago. It was something that had dragged on and on and on for many, many years. It was just resolved about 10 years ago.

So the workers went on, you know we're negotiating and had to go strike to obtain a fair and balanced pension. There were a lot of things going around at that time, just part of the amalgamation and bringing the coastwise workers up to par with the longshoremen, I think it was a little bit later. But one of the major pieces of legislation that came out of the 1958 strike was the agreement to take the issue of pensions to the Supreme Court of Canada

and that government wouldn't object with being heard by the Supreme Court of Canada. Up to that time, the Labor Boards had ruled that you couldn't strike for pensions because pensions were for people who were no longer in the workforce and so therefore they had no right to strike because they were no longer in the workforce and no longer there. And so the Labor Minister at the time—I can't remember his name—and I can't remember exact the length of the strike, I'm sure one of the fellows here can remember that. But the issue went to the Supreme Court of Canada to decide if you can strike over pensions and the Supreme Court of Canada said yes. So therefore that vindicated the longshoremen, then that gave them the groundwork to go ahead and set some negotiations to improve the benefits and to secure the pension. Because before that, the employer had control over it and he do pretty well whatever he wanted, and you know so he had to prove the case that they were doing something they shouldn't be doing or that you were entitled to. So out of all of this came the whole joint trusteeship of the pensions plan and stuff like that to give you some control over it.

[00:46:55] **HARVEY:** Did you hear much about the development of autonomy of the Canadian area in 1959?

[00:47:01] **TOM:** Well, I know a little bit about that. I read a booklet on it, I've talked to numerous people on it. I'm certainly not an expert on it. But some of the desires in Canada in the sixties was a lot of nationalism going on and a lot of unions wanted to break away from their internationals and form their own unions. Become the Pulp Paper Worker's Union, or the PPWC, the Canadian Auto Workers Union, there were numerous ones that wanted to break away from the internationals and the dichotomy that comes out of that.

The move in Canada was to seek autonomy for the Canadian area of the ILWU, but at the same time remain within the ILWU. So it was never an issue of the union wanting to be separate from this great entity, it was just to have our own autonomy within Canada to decide our own issues, to you know, abide by the International Constitution still—you know, you've got on how to run the union.

But to be able to have ability—because we have different obligation, we are a different country, the same things that are going arise with the Panama Canal pilots. You have a different country, a different constitution, different labor laws, you have to make representations to those boards and all that.

So at the time that it was happening, the Canadian—ILWU Canada would pay their dues down to International [ILWU]. The International would then fund the Canadian office, so you're losing money both ways there on the exchange rates and on the funds. So in essence you know, I guess people looked at in the end, said well you know, for whatever the small amount of differences—plus you got an exchange rate plus you got the rates that they charge you for changing their money, and then the bookkeeping involved—that it would be better just if Canada would be a self-sustaining operation within the ILWU and we would be a region or area. And everything didn't happen overnight, it happened over a series of years. The International used to appoint regional directors and what have you in Canada. I think Roy Smith touched on that in the book, Harvey [Schwartz]'s book about the solidarity stories, that Canada wanted the ability to govern on collective agreements, have our own say over collective agreements. And that any officers or directors or people to interpret the constitution or the collective agreement would be elected by Canadians and would serve in Canada at the pleasure of the membership in Canada and not by dictate from somewhere else.

[00:50:03] **HARVEY:** Should we hit on the statutory holiday pay denial situation in 1966?

[00:50:09] **TOM:** Sure, I know a little bit about that. One of the last surviving presidents actually or vice presidents from Canada, Les Copan, he was planning to be down here at this convention, but he's not here for some reason. He couldn't make it.

Prior to '66 in certain statutory holidays, longshore workers were mandated, they had to go to work, but they

weren't allowed to be paid, they wouldn't be paid holiday pay and they wouldn't get paid extra time for if they worked on holiday, on statutory holiday. That's what we call them I don't know what they call it down here but I'm guessing it would be the same.

There was a long drawn out strike. Or there were several work stoppages that led up to the court case, in that case too, in that every time they would come up, the employer would refuse to pay for statutory holiday. And then if you worked on that holiday, they wouldn't pay you anything extra like a Saturday or a Sunday time, or the time in excess of 40 hours. All our Canadian workers if you had worked at a stat holiday, you had time-and-a-half. If you didn't work, if you [had] worked X amount of days prior to the holiday, you got paid for the holiday. That was the idea of making it a holiday, otherwise it would be another day off work with no pay.

So the longshoremen recognized that this was discriminatory, that we're not second-class citizens, we're not children of lesser god or anything. We're entitled to the same thing as everybody else in Canada. The same labor rights. So there was the lead-up to Victoria Day, which is the Queen's birthday in Canada, the Employer's Association had gone to the Labor Board at time—I think it was CLRB at the time—and they've gone to Parliament, said you know, we're not—longshore is probably not going to work again, they hadn't gone to work on Easter and they obtained injunctions to force them to go back to work.

But the time they went to court and got an injunction, it was already too late, the holiday was already over. And meanwhile nobody worked the cargo and those couple of, those statutory holidays. So they had gone to Parliament to try and get a peremptory law passed saying longshoremen were not entitled to statutory holidays. But they couldn't do that. So they knew coming up that the—on the Victoria Day holiday that the longshoremen wouldn't go to work.

And then, many of the people that were working longshoremen could have only been, fought in the Second World War—and some of them fought in the First World War and the Korean War—and they felt that everybody was entitled to every other benefit that every other Canadian workers were entitled to, so they decided not to go to work.

And the officers of the union were ordered to appear in front of the magistrate judges in Vancouver and were handed an injunction, told to go and direct the members to go to work on that holiday. I believe it culminated on Dominion Day, which is the first of July which is now Canada Day, but I could be wrong. The officers of the Canadian area met the Canadian executive board and said, "By the way, no we're not going to order the members to go to work. Statutory holiday like everybody else is entitled to a statutory holiday and they should be paid to take the day off with their families for the holiday like everybody else, unless they choose to go to work."

So the judge sentenced them to prison. And they were ordered to appear at the courthouse at a certain time and be carted off to jail. There was a lot of pressure from—it was kind of similar to what is going on right in AFL-CIO [American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations] situation down here in the United States—where the labor movement in Canada said, "Well, hold on here a second. We don't want the labor unions going off to jail here." Because it was hard to get everybody behind the idea of a couple of people just not being paid. And so they were urging the officers to pay the fine, order the men to go to work and pay whatever fines were outstanding. But the officers refused, saying, no it was a matter of principle and they carted off to Chilliwack Forest Camp in a place called Oakalla [Oakalla Prison Farm, now B.C. Penitentiary], which was the city jail—or the provincial jail.

And they were in jail for a period of time and then the minister once again—at that time the new minister, I think it was Bryce Monroe. He turned around and said that he would change the law and that it would be proposed in front of the House of Commons as a bill from the government. Subsequent to that, that the longshoremen

would—they drew up a formula—you needed 15 days prior to the statutory holiday in order to be paid for statutory holiday and, in addition, longshoremen have an additional sentence in the law, that says “or if you have 120 hours. Because a lot of the time you could work 120 hours but you wouldn't have 15 dispatches in a day, because some people were hitting hours, some worked 12 hours in the out ports and what have you, and so they recognized those days. So if you had 15 days or 120 hours, which is true still today, that you get paid for statutory holiday. So it was not only the win where we got the same as everybody else, but we got a little bit more than everybody else.

[00:55:57] **HARVEY:** That seems to be a landmark Canadian occurrence. Why is it—become legendary?

[00:56:07] **TOM:** Well it became legendary because of the fact that the presidents, not only the fact that they went to jail, which was a big thing in itself, but the fact that they stood up the government and that they stood up against inequality, where our members were being treated as lesser people than the rest of the workforce. It showed that if you stand together, on your principles, you can take some hits once in awhile, but you got to do the right thing. Generally speaking, you won't go too far wrong.

[00:56:45] **HARVEY:** Sounds good.

[00:56:47] **TOM:** A lot of different people, a lot of other leaders in different unions would not have—would never had done that. They'd hide behind a paper and say, ‘I've told to tell you to go back to work, so do it.’ But they didn't.

[00:56:59] **HARVEY:** Probably true. Probably true.

Much of, well five Vancouver locals were consolidated into Local 500 in 1966. What is—what have you seen as the advantage of that? Has there been an advantage of that?

[00:57:15] **TOM:** Well, I came into the union after that and came down working on the waterfront after that. One advantage is that you got to share all the work of the locals so you weren't necessarily leaving jobs go empty, because you couldn't fill them in your hall. Meanwhile the other halls, longshore hall, deep sea hall might not have any work where people are standing around not getting any work and meanwhile you can fill jobs. It helped to increase the camaraderie—and I can't remember the year, that was the issue the strike was over was to bring up parity. The longshoremen forewent that they negotiated for a wage increase. They gave that wage increase up in order to increase to go to the coastwise division, which is the warehouse division. To bring them up to parity with the deep sea longshore workers and it helped to solidify the waterfront.

And it's a good thing—the ability to travel. In Canada, we don't have quite the same advantage of travel as they do down in the U.S. where you get paid your travel, voluntary travel. But any longshore union member from one local could come down to another local and sign in and get work. Now, if you worked at a pulp mill or a tire factory or somewhere else, when the work got slow you're just laid off you're finished and you had to go find another job. The unique ability of a longshore worker to go from one port to another port where it's busy and get a job is a tremendous advantage, and an advantage of the coast-wide collective agreement.

[00:58:55] **HARVEY:** You've mentioned that there was some similarity between the 2002 Lockout and the British Columbia situation in 2010.

[00:59:03] **TOM:** Yeah, the situation was the same. If you look back at the panel boards, there's a display that's on, the International puts up at the conventions, where it's bunch of different panel boards telling the story of the '34 strike, the 1948 strike. If you go back and you look at those panels—with a clear, and open mind—you'll see

that the tactics the employers used in those days are very, very similar to what's going on today.

So what happened there is if you look at the—read the '48 panels, you'll see where the employers got alongside the business community, which are always at odds with the longshore workers. And the first thing they do is they started a series of stories demonizing the workforce, demonizing the leadership of the union, creating doubt in the community, trying to create doubt in the membership's mind about their ability of their officers to negotiate a collective agreement. They start—they create doubt in the community and try to drive a wedge between the officers and the membership or between the union and the community. And they then go to Parliament—or in your case down here I guess they go to the Senate or whatever, Congress—and start telling these hoary, old urban myths about the longshore workforce. And they try to create an image that the workforce is untrustworthy, that we make too much money, that we're not reliable, which is all not true.

But they do that for one purpose, and that's to gain advantage. When you look at the 1948 panel board, you'll see the same thing what they did in San Francisco. The newspapers got together and started printing a whole bunch of stories, usually all—never favorable to the ILWU, never favorable to the workforce. And then they come up with these proposed solutions, like 'take away their right to strike,' 'let's have a government panel that'll sit down and intervene in the dispute,' 'let's have somebody who will'—let me watch my terminology here—'but somebody who will come along and deem what it is that you're worthy of receiving.' You know, take away your right to strike, take away your right to freely negotiate. And they'll attack the membership, the leadership.

Up in British Columbia, we ran into the same thing in 2010. The employer did not want to negotiate, they did not want the union to have the right to strike. They went to Ottawa, and similar to what happened in 2002 down in the coast here. They went to Ottawa, they obtained the backing of several major large shippers who used the ports of British Columbia, who told stories of all sorts of calamity and financial disaster that would befall the Canadian economy if the longshore workers were given the right to negotiate and if we were given the right to go on strike.

Now there hadn't been strike in Canada since about the 1980's or early 1990's, that there hadn't been a strike. So we had a period, a very peaceful period—I think 1992 was the last strike—I could be wrong on that—so they created this atmosphere of doubt and this atmosphere of distrust of the union and our ability to negotiate. Anyways, they started spreading stories in the newspapers and they started spreading stories about the officers and things just to try and create some doubt. But just like in 2002 on the coast here, the union stood strong, the membership stood strong, the membership supported the negotiating committee, they recognized what the employer was up to.

Part of the reason they recognized us was because when we saw the panel board display at the convention, we ordered a copy of it. We bought a copy of it for Canada and at our convention we asked Willy to have a copy of that shipped up to Canada and we had a display put up there and we put on some education seminars for people. So when they came in the union office they could see what had happened in the past. And if they looked at it and looked at what was happening today, in 2010, they can see 'aha, it's the same tactic'—different individual who controls the newspaper, but it's the same exact tactic. And so they stood very strong, they were foursquare behind the leadership of the union and they were reported to on a regular basis, so they were very confident. Then the employer knew that they couldn't break us, they couldn't divide us, so we ended up achieving a collective agreement. But it was a hard struggle, but then again what has it ever been easy down here, right? It's never been easy, it's always a challenge. [pause] And that's why we've got to rise to the challenge.

[01:04:20] **HARVEY:** Tom, you retired in 2012, how come you chose to retire?

[01:04:29] **TOM:** Yeah, I didn't run for office in 2012, I retired in 2013. Well, I felt it was time. I'd been in office

for 16 years, and as you know when you're in union office, you put in an awful lot of long hours, you're away from home an awful lot of the time. And my wife and I have been married for 44 years this year. So you need to be able to enjoy life and we both always enjoyed life—do, not to talk in the past-tense—it's time to move on. Time to bridge the gap to allow some younger people to come along to assume the leadership roles. The reason why I stayed on for a year afterwards was because we had a leadership course on and went and spoke at the leadership course.

There have been a number of people developed over the years. I think people need to exercise their abilities and need to be able to work, they need to be able to feel that they're appreciated and try out some of their other ideas, like being a second or third quarterback, right? People need a chance to get in the game, and it was time [for me] to go. It was time to enjoy life a little bit, travel around.

We have a good pension plan as the ILWU in the U.S., we have a good healthcare plan, and so you wanted to be able to take advantage of that, that's the reason you negotiated it, is to be able to take care of—I always enjoyed being in office, I always enjoyed the—not so much being in office of it, but the act and things that we were doing, working with Big Bob [McEllrath, ILWU President] , Willie [Adams] , Wesley [Furtado] , Leo, and Ray [Ray Familathe] , you know, and [?Rafe?] [inaudible] , you know. And working with the IEB [International Executive Board] .

The education, it never stops, you're always getting new education with what's happening within the union, what's going on around the world and the ability to help other people, help other unions. But also the realization that you've got to rely on yourself. When I say yourself, I don't mean oneself, individually, oneself as the ILWU. You can't always rely that some other union is going to back your play. You got to be prepared that if you get in the struggle that you don't necessarily wait for a whole bunch of people to show up and help you out. You got to be there. So it was time to go, time to relax and come down with the Pensioners and tell some old war stories and enjoy life.

[01:07:15] **HARVEY:** Do you have any take on the leaving of the AFL-CIO?

[01:07:19] **TOM:** Well, not really because I don't know all the ins and out. I mean I listened to Brother McEllrath [Big Bob] this morning. Bob and I get along great. And I know it was a tough decision for him to make. I know he's giving the due and proper consideration, and you know, like always, he brought it to the board, brought it to the convention. It just felt that the time was right, that the support was not there from AFL-CIO. I can't second guess that because we're not in the situation. But I know that whatever the outcome, you know, what the outcome is now, it was done with proper consideration, it wasn't done you know, on the spur of the moment or off the cuff.

[01:08:04] **HARVEY:** Are you going to become active in the Pacific Coast Pensioners Association?

[01:08:12] **TOM:** Well, I'm going to be active in the Local 500 Pensioners association of Canada and we participate down here, attending the conventions when we can. And I think some of the fellows that talk with Rich Austin and other people, I mean, they always make us feel welcome. Next year the Pensioner's Association meeting up in Canada. I'm going to take a year off from working, you know, our saying 'you retire from the job, but not from the union or from the struggle.' But I think it's necessary to step back a little bit from union activity, involved with a lot of the people, and trying to learn because there's learning experience too. I'm trying to find out some of the things the Pensioners do, how they organize different events, what we're involved with, maybe healthcare issues, pension issues. Up in Canada right now, we have to keep an eye out because they're trying to bust up the Canada Pension Plan, which is the equivalent of your Social Security. So the same groups at work down here in the U.S. trying to get rid of it are up in Canada trying to wreck our pension plan. So to find out

who different committees who are meeting with and that. So yes, I'll try to be active but not jumping in with both feet.

[01:09:31] **HARVEY:** Do you have any take on the, looking back, respectively what it's all meant to you—you kind of this fairly clear it seems to me—but we often ask a final question, you know, looking back what it all meant to you?

[01:09:47] **TOM:** Sure, looking back, I'm very glad. One of the best things that happened in my life was starting a job on the waterfront and getting into the ILWU, getting involved with the executive in my local. It was very important and, I believe, very fulfilling. Some of the people I've met over the years, the officers, and the different committees of people that I've worked with. It's been an inspiration, it's helped to actually guide a lot of my decisions.

Sometimes during negotiations, in 2010 negotiation, I'd go down New Westminster waterfront and there's a bench there, Don Garcia's family had put in place with his name on it. I just go sit there and I just think. Because Don was an inspiring guy too, right? He was a tough guy and he was a hard negotiator. He was a good union leader. So I met any number of people like that in my career at different places, some standout like Barry Campbell, he was my secretary treasurer in Local 500 in the Port of Vancouver. Working with him when I first got on the executive and you know, learn from people like him on how to handle yourself, if you will. And how to really [pause] be a good union member as well as a good officer and a good committee member. And how to work with people and you know, put your point across, argue your point, but at the end of the day, we got down with the democratic decision. And to, like I said, be an honorary citizen, or something, or honorable citizen. So yes, it's been a great experience.

[01:11:51] **HARVEY:** Do you care to add anything that we've overlooked?

[01:11:55] **TOM:** No, Harvey, I think you've touched on everything, the big thing is we got to continue to educate the younger workforce or the workforce that's coming in. The jobs are becoming more and more diverse, we can't take our eye off the ball, you know. We have to maintain our participation union. You can't sit back and let somebody else do it for you. You have to get involved, whether it's working in the picnics, whether it's working at Pensioners events to get yourself familiar with the workings the ILWU and the different things that we're involved in. Often times, we don't want to, I don't think, become union where you just show up and you pay your dues or even worse, it comes off your check once a month, you don't know where it goes or who it's going to, you don't know who your officers are. You always got to be prepared to participate, ask questions—you know don't be accusatory when you ask them but ask questions and try to find out what's going on in your community. It's all involved with political action. I heard it yesterday on the floor, we cannot rely on other people to do our work for us, whether it's the different unions or politician, we have to be at the forefront, we have to be there speaking on the behalf of the ILWU because nobody will carry our message as well as the member of the ILWU or one of our officers. That's just the bottom line on the whole thing. Education and participation.

[01:13:27] **HARVEY:** Thank you, Tom.

[END PART ONE/BEGIN PART TWO]

[01:13:36] **HARVEY:** Tom Dufresne wanted to add a point to his interview, which was done a little while ago.

[01:13:43] **TOM:** Hi, I just wanted to touch on a couple of points. One, we were discussing a little earlier on about my wife, Liz and I and the traveling we've done across Canada back in 1969, 1970. I just feel like I should

add that that's a big part of being in office in the ILWU, you're on the road a lot, you're busy a lot, you're attending a lot of meetings, so it's very important that you have a partner, your wife, your spouse that's supportive. Liz has always been very supportive of the work I've been doing for the union and with the union members and tolerant of the late night phone calls and the endless amount of research and work that goes into the job at times. And I think it's important to include in the Labor Archives also, the oral history, the importance of having a strong support.

Also, we touched briefly yesterday on the international solidarity, and the solidarity of support during the lockouts, which mainly happened on the West Coast, and you know, employer lockouts [West Coast Lockout] . Two examples that come readily to mind are the dispute involving the [SS] Neptune Jade, which was a vessel that was loaded by scabs in the Port of Liverpool and sailed around the world, being turned back at various ports up in the U.S. And the Neptune Jade, when it left San Francisco [, California] and headed for Vancouver, B.C. The ship was turned back by a community picket line and the refusal of the foreman's local, Local 514 and [ILWU] Local 500 to work the vessel, and with the support of ILWU Canada, the Canadian area. At the time, Gordie Westrand was president. And that started the whole new round of the people realizing the importance of building solidarity. I think within the ILWU, in particular, because of the upcoming set of negotiations that was going to be happening in 2002. It was important in getting everybody to realize that we're not isolated, it's not one group of workers on the docks that are going to be affected, it's a worldwide trend.

Another example was the dispute involving the Patricks [Patrick Corporation, Ltd.] and the Maritime Unit of Australia [MUA] where the vessel, the Columbus Canada, which was held back—I think it was in the L.A.-Long Beach Harbor or somewhere off the west coast of California. And it was eventually turned back and was sent on its way. That ship was scheduled to head for Vancouver, British Columbia or New Westminster, Local 502, in Canada. And the shipping agent was Greer Shipping that was handling the vessel. [They] tried to entice the members and the ILWU and Canada to work the vessel after they've been turned back by the locals in southern California. And that was rejected by the membership and by the Executive Board—it just happened the time we were having a Canadian Executive Board at the time the call came in, to see if it we're interested in working in some extra work in picking up this vessel. And they were told in no uncertain terms that we would not work the vessel and that if—they could go to court and get an injunction or whatever they wanted. And part of the reason that it worked in refusing the vessel, is that we pointed out to them—and when I say “we” [I mean] officers in the area board—that it's not just this one vessel that would be a problem for them, but for every vessel they brought it in the future, if they forced us to work that vessel through an injunctions or whatever, that we would then cause them problems for the rest of their vessels. So that got their attention. [white noise interruption] And convince them to back off and take the ship away so that it wasn't working in Canada.

I think it's an important piece of the story that gets overlooked sometimes, it was Canada's involvement in the support for the MUA in that dispute. I remember flying to San Francisco, meeting with Bryan McWilliams and having Jon Coomb's phone [call] , and because of the various laws of the different countries, that we had to work it that way, because with the different wiretap laws for the injunctions that were in-place against the MUA, they were in danger of having something go awry because of what somebody else did. And so we were in constant communication with them at the time.

Finally, I just want to say, none of these things are things done in isolation, or by one individual, or even a small group of individuals. It takes a community and the community to work together and none of this would've been possible without the support of the officers and the support of the membership. It's key that somebody would come forward with ideas or plans or what have you. And it's important in the membership to support those goals and that you explain what it is that you have planned to do, as much as you can, given the different laws and different countries these days. And I just say to the members out there, and the potential members out there,

people coming up through the ranks, that it's important to be a participant, don't be a passenger. Get involved in your local union, get involved with the affairs and get involved in your labor community, because these things that happened in 1934, 1948, 2002, they're not going to stop tomorrow, they're not going to stop next week. It's important that we all be educated and that we adapt to new tactics to maintain our leverage in these very important struggles with the government, with the employers, and with the international shipping community. Thank you.